DEMAND X—PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION.

Mr. M. K. Gopala Pillai: Sir, I rise to move for a demand not exceeding Rs. 2,56,416 under Demand X—Public Health and Sanitation.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvila (*Mavelikara and Tiruvalla* cum *Pattanamthitta*) : Sir, I wish to speak a few words on this Demand. In attempting to do very big things which will prove beneficial to the people of the land, small things are sometimes neglected. That is what has happened in connection with the administration of the Public Health Department. I will give an illustration, Sir. Some years ago, the department had introduced a very necessary system of treatment to school children. While engaged in the treatment of children, there are special cases to which the attention of the specialists become very necessary. I understand that in treating children the services of specialists may become necessary and then they were sent down to Trivandrum at Government expense because of the availability of experts there. In some cases, attendants also are sent with them. I appreciated very much the little touches of kindness of Government in the matter of treating little children. After all, who is there that does not like poor children being treated free by Government agency? I do not know why the department concerned has stopped this practice of treating children now-a-days. I am at a loss to see why this little act of kindness once shown to the poor children should be withdrawn now. I am also told by the Health officer that there are poor people who need glasses for which there is only a provision of Rs. 500 in the department. Probably, the officer concerned will be able to make the best use of that allotment. But, how can children with bad eyes study? After all there is a meagre provision of Rs. 500 and the department cannot make any commission out of it. That is a matter for consideration at the hands of Government.

A second request that I want to make in this connection is the granting of comforts such as urinals and latrines to the pedestrian public as well as for those who take to bus travels. From various important centres, people are coming to our parts and they experience immense difficulties to attend to their nature calls. Kottayam is a place where this difficulty is keenly felt. Kottarakara is another instance in point. With regard to Kottarakara we have a peculiar grievance. That is a great centre of passengers and occasionally we used to take advantage of the Satrom in that centre. But now I find that the Inspector-General of Police has sent his people there so that no admission is allowed into the Satrom. Of course there is some gain to the Government but it is of great inconvenience to the travellers. I have seen the policemen guarding the gates there.

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[Mr. K. K. Kuruvila.]

I have to congratulate the Government for I understand that they have an extensive scheme of appointing midwives in different parts of Travancore. I understand that that scheme has been submitted to the Government departmentally. I also understand that there is a great response on the part of the people for it. I specially thank the Government for that and I hope that the system will be introduced very soon. I need not say how much is the need for midwives in this country. That need is greater than that of hospitals. With the introduction of Panchayats in our country, I hope this will receive additional support from the Government.

I also understand that for the construction of latrines in rural areas there is a provision of only Rs. 500 in the budget. I cannot understand how the Public Health Department can serve this very great need in Travancore with this small amount. The Director of Public Health certainly is very careful about Government money. But no Government can be congratulated for saving money along these lines. I hope that the Government will consider the matter and do the needful.

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar: I support the demand. In doing so I wish to draw the attention of the Director of Public Health to the most unsatisfactory condition of the public health of Kuttanad. The Director of Public Health himself knows that out of all the places in Travancore Kuttanad is the most insanitary place. There is no season in the year when there is no epidemic. A perusal of the records in the dispensaries at Pulincunnu and Edathua will convince the Government that the epidemic of typhoid is prevailing during almost all the seasons of the year. What is the reason for all these? It is mostly on account of the water that the people there are using for drinking purposes. For nearly four months of the year the water of all the rivers and canals is brackish. We get only salt water. During that season we get water from some tanks which are situated in the midst of paddy fields which are under cultivation. We can more or less imagine the nature of water of a tank which is situated in the midst of paddy fields, in the midst of all sorts of rubbish. Moreover all the latrines and privies of the people of Kuttanad are opened towards running water. It is this water that we drink. Unless and until some legislation to prevent such a system is introduced I do not think the sanitary condition of the people can be improved.

During the cultivation season we are put to very much trouble by mosquitoes. I know that the mosquitoes bite. Whether they are dangerous mosquitoes or not I do not know. There is no malaria or filaria there. But mosquitoes are a nuisance. If these mosquitoes are eradicated it will be a boon to the people.

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Now the animals dying in that place are thrown into the river and it is this water that we have to drink, That system also has to be prevented. A legislation must be enacted. I draw the pointed attention of the Director of Public Health to this matter.

There was a scheme to give drinking water by means of pump or so by the Water Works Department. Some two or three years ago Rs. 35,000 was provided in the budget for purchase of machinery for boring wells. But nothing has further been done. This year we find Rs. 12,000 provided. I do not know what has become of the remaining surplus. Anyhow I urge that the Director of Public Health will make the necessary recommendations to the Government so that drinking water may be supplied to us at a very early date. If the Water Works Department thinks that it is not possible to give us drinking water by digging more wells, it would be enough if we are provided with good tanks here and there from where we could get water to drink. I would suggest that this matter should receive the immediate attention of the department.

Mr. James Fletcher: Sir, I support the motion, and desire to bring certain facts for the consideration of the Director of Public Health. Sir, we are aware of the fact that malaria began in certain pakuthies of Neyyattinkara. From those pakuthies it spread; and now we have got the infection spread out to the Vilavancode, Kalkulam and Nedumangad taluks. Not only to these taluks has malaria spread but it has even reached places like the Trivandrum town. There are cases of malaria in the Trivandrum town. Though the Director of Public Health may deny that there is any case of malarial attack, I can refer him to two cases now in the General Hospital where the Doctors have found that it is first class malaria. Thus it is clear that malaria is spreading. It is high time to check its growth. Of course I am aware that this department alone may not be able to stop the epidemic. There should be the co-operation of the people also. But it is high time that the Director gives sufficient instruction to the people to co-operate with him in eradicating the disease from those areas. As one of my friends remarked, malaria is a disease which brought about the destruction of some of the ancient towns. Unless and until every effort is made and scientific action taken to stop the epidemic, it will lead to dangerous results. Therefore I request that the Director should take necessary steps and very vigorous action to stop the spread of the disease. The Director thinks that quinine is the only medicine for malaria. I know of Sidha and Ayurveda Doctors treating many of the malaria patients with success. Malaria has become so very dangerous that one of the Police sub stations at Ottasekharamangalam had to be locked up. No police officer is free from attack in that area. With in two or

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[Mr. James Fletcher]

three days of his arrival he will be attacked by malaria. Two or three policemen stationed there died as a result of malaria. It has become so dangerous. It is high time that immediate action is taken.

Another point which I wanted to bring to the notice of the House is regarding the villages in the sea coast. The coastal villages are very much neglected. People there are very poor. They have no idea of sanitation. They live huddled up in small huts without any clean place for spending their evenings. They have no latrines or playgrounds or anything of that sort. Any member of the department who visits these places will be convinced that their life is very miserable because of the unsatisfactory surroundings. When infectious diseases come to the area they die like flies. Something should be done in the case of these villages to keep them in better sanitary and healthier condition. I draw the attention of the department to this fact for the following reason. The strength of a chain depends upon its weak link. Similarly if the State has to keep its health in the proper way, you have to get rid of weak points like the coastal regions. Once when infection is begun in such areas it will spread like wild fire to the interior parts of the State. Therefore I draw the attention of the department to seeing to the sanitary condition of the coastal villages.

Mr. K. M. Kesavan: There is no department which requires the co operation of the public so much as the Public Health Department. As my honourable friend Mr. Fletcher has pointed out, malaria has spread from Neyyattinkara to Nedumangad and this morning another friend was remarking that it has broken out in the northern taluks also. I do not know how far that statement is true. Anyhow it is a matter which requires immediate attention of the Public Health Department.

There are some other diseases which are rampant in our country. I refer to filariasis and tuberculosis. Government have already started a hospital in South Travancore to alleviate the distress caused by tuberculosis. I think that there is no other disease which has done and is doing more havoc to humanity in India than tuberculosis. Every effort must be made to root out this disease. People who have visited the northern portions of my constituency viz., Shertallai, might have seen persons dragging along with difficult steps because of their swollen legs. Filariasis is the disease that is rampant in these parts. Very often we see young children, and handsome children too, suffering from this disease. It is a pity to see them, Sir. There is no more charitable work to be done than the work of wiping out this disease from those parts of my constituency. I understand that people who have got filariasis are laid up with fever from 4 to 5 days in a month and it would take a

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week more for them to recover from the after effects of that fever. Thus for about 10 or 15 days in a month these people cannot do any sort of work And often they find it very difficult to attend to their domestic pursuits even. If that is the condition with regard to a large number of people in our country, certainly, the future of our country is very gloomy. In order to improve the public health of our population, in order to wipe out such widespread diseases like filariasis and tuberculosis, the Health Department and the public should co-operate in the most hearty manner. Another thing to which I want to draw the attention of the Department and the Government is, as my esteemed friend Mr. Kuruvilla said, the need for better urinals where people gather together. In all important centres, not only in towns, but also in places where people come and wait for buses, it has been found very difficult to answer the first call of nature. This difficulty must have been experienced in a greater degree by the other sex, the women, of our country. I understand that there is no separate provision for this purpose even in this building for the lady members.

Then I want to speak a few words about our satrams. These satrams are now under the control of the Land Revenue Department. I have no objection for their being continued under the same department provided they would be looked after very well. I would request the Government that these satrams be handed over to the Health Department if they would construct ideal latrines and urinals and show to the public how health can be taken care of by good sanitation. With these observations I support the motion wholeheartedly.

Mr. Kochikkal P. Balakrishnan Tampi : Sir, I would also support the demand. In doing so, I wish to make a few observations regarding the attitude of the Alleppey Municipal Council in the matter of public health. I do not know whether it is part of their financial tactics to bring pressure on the Government for more liberal contribution from Government, they have made a most unwise decision to stop their anti-mosquito work which had proved to be very useful so far as the public health of the people are concerned. They were carrying on the anti-mosquito campaign in co-operation with the Public Health Department. As a permanent resident of Alleppey I am aware that the mosquito trouble has been considerably minimised by the very useful work carried on by the Health Department. Therefore, I request that Government may be pleased to instruct or rather to order the Municipal Council to continue this useful work.

With regard to the proposal of Mr. Anantasiva Aiyar to make adequate provision for the supply of good drinking water for Kuttanad, I entirely agree with him. By erecting and making a few

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[Mr. Kochikkal P. Balakrishnan Tampi.]

tube wells in a few isles of the Kuttanad area that problem can be very satisfactorily solved. In that matter, I have to express my thankfulness to the Government because a few months ago when there was an outbreak of the epidemic of Anthrax in Kuttanad I wrote to the Government and officers of the Public Health Department and Veterinary Department atonce went to the spot and made the necessary investigations and proper arrangements to see that the disease was well controlled. In that connection I also propose that the Magistrates should go round the places and make the people understand, that if they break the laws in the Penal Code regarding offences against public health they will be brought to book. I think, as it is, the Penal Code can proceed against those who commit offences against public health. Incidently I propose also that the Director of Public Health might keep himself in touch with the Legal Remembrancer to see whether some legislation on the lines of the Madras Public Health Act could not be enacted here too, so as to empower the Public Health Officer to prosecute anyone who commits acts against the laws of sanitation. I do really congratulate the Public Health Officers for the good work they have done with the result that there had been no outbreak of cholera or smallpox in the land for the last two years.

I request the Director of Public Health to carry on investigations regarding the diet of the people. I know that the Department is well staffed by people who have taken Doctor's degrees and diplomas in Public Health. I request them that investigations may be carried on in the line of what is being done in Coonoor. The diet of the average citizen is very poor. It is deficient in vitamins. These vitamins have swelled into all the letters of the alphabet of the language and they threaten to swell into the numerals also. The Public Health Department should investigate what kind of food the people should eat and what they should reject. They should discover the ideal diet at a small cost that could be recommended to the poor of the land. So far, I do not know if any investigations have been carried on by the Department in this direction, although there are competent people on the staff of the Department who could very well carry on such investigations.

Dr. M. K. Gopala Pillai: Sir, the honourable member for Thiruvalla complained that adequate facilities are not given for the medical examination of school children. Till 2 or 3 years ago there were no competent medical men to treat school children in their respective places. But with the appointment of a specialist in the District Hospital at Kottayam, there was no further necessity for bringing the children to Trivandrum. That was why children were not being taken to Trivandrum.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla ; Do we get the services of the Specialised Doctor throughout the year ?

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Dr. M. K. Gopala Pillai: His services can be had year in and year out. There is also a qualified doctor to correct eye defects. It is for the honourable members to induce the parents to take their children suffering from eye defects to the hospitals. The parents bringing the children to the hospitals, from distant places were being given a small remuneration also. Though we extend that help even now, that does not seem to be a sufficient stimulus for them to continue to take their children to the hospitals. But considering the large number of children suffering from eye defects and the vast amount of expenditure to be incurred on that account the practice of giving remuneration to the parents was stopped temporarily. The prices of glasses also contribute to a huge expenditure. The headmasters were coaxing the parents to get glasses for their children who suffered from eye defects. In many cases the parents did not co-operate with the children or with the teachers or with the staff of this Department.

Now, with regard to the urinals I may say, Sir, that urinals are wanting in several places. There are no urinals at Kottayam and Kottarakara. But the public health administration at Kottayam is vested with the Municipality there and the Municipal President at Kottayam is.....

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla: Has the Department advised the President of the Municipal Council in this respect ?

Dr M. K. Gopala Pillai: When the Public Health Director visited Kottayam advice was tendered to him but with no result. The honourable member also spoke with regard to the inadequacy of funds for the construction of latrines in rural areas. This amount of Rs. 500 is only intended to construct latrines for demonstration purposes. It is not intended to supply latrines freely to every house in the village. The idea was to construct some model latrines in certain central places where people can come and see them. But when requests were forthcoming, the department had been complying with those requests.

Now with regard to the prevalance of typhoid in the Ambalapuzha taluk, I wish to draw the attention of the honourable members that the spread of the disease is due to the objectionable habit of easing indiscriminately in the rivers. In the Kuttanad area this habit is very common among the people. A legislation is under the contemplation of the Government. Mosquitoes cannot be eradicated from Kuttanad. It is a water-logged area and the mosquito nuisance mostly prevails there from Makaram to Medom, that is, till the harvest season. But with the onset of monsoon the mosquito nuisance will abate. It is in paddy fields that water collects and any anti-mosquito measures may become injurious to the growth of paddy.

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[Mr. M. K. Gopala Pillai]

With regard to the Malaria question in Nedumangad, Neyyattinkara and Vilavancode, I may inform the honourable members that malaria has not been brought to those places, but it has been endemic there during the last several years and with the failure of the monsoon and owing to certain Meteorological conditions prevailing there, there is a tendency for that particular disease to take an epidemic turn. As the honourable member concerned is aware, the Government have been gracious enough to sanction the necessary amount to adopt all preventive measures. There is already in the budget an amount of Rs. 10,000 to launch mosquito control measures. With the onset of monsoon, malaria reaches its peak of infection. Quinnine distribution centres have already been opened and two or three more hospitals were lately opened, one at Vilapil another at Malayinkil and the third at Marayamuttam.

With regard to sanitation in the beach villages, I may inform the honourable members that beach districts are grouped in conservancy towns and from Vizhinjam up to Cape Comorin beach villages are grouped in charge of the conservancy Overseers. Steps are being taken to improve the sanitation of those places. There is scarcity of water and absence of latrines. This is gradually being attended to. Mr. Kesavan referred to the incidence of filariasis and tuberculosis. Lately a tuberculosis sanatorium was ordered to be opened at Nagercoil and within two or three years that will be an accomplished fact. There is already filariasis control work in Sherthalai and Alleppey and considerable improvement has been effected in regard to its incidence and infection. Before the control work was started, 30 percent of children under 5 years suffered from filarial infection. After four years of control work, only one per cent was seen to be affected.

With regard to the idea of stopping mosquito control measures at Alleppey by the Municipality, I may inform the honourable member that Government will do the needful in the matter.

The honourable member also wanted to improve the diet of the people Sir, an investigation has been already carried out with regard to the sample of diets for the people in Travancore. Probably he was not aware of that investigation. One of the senior officers of the Department was deputed to Coonnoor who under went a special training in dietetics. The special officer has submitted his report to the Government and it is under consideration by Government. They would start this work very soon.

There is a provision of Rs 25,000 in the budget for investigation purposes of the water supply in Kuttanad. Some tube wells will be constructed and the Public Works Department has promised to take up the work as early as possible.

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In view of the explanation offered, I request that the amount may be granted.

The question that Government be granted a sum of Rs. 2,56,416 under Demand X—Public Health and Sanitation, was put and carried

The grant was made.

DEMAND NO. XI—PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (INCLUDING) WATER WORKS AND DRAINAGE.

Mr. S. Sesha Aiyar: Sir, I beg to move that Government be granted a sum of Rs. 5 ,88,962 under Demand XI- Public Works Department including Water Works and Drainage.

Mr. E. K. Kuripe : സർ, ഞാൻ ഈ ഡിമാൻറിനെ അനുകൂലിക്കുന്നു. ഉൾനാടുകളിൽ ഉള്ള റോഡുകളെ സംബന്ധിച്ചു പി. ഡബ്ലിയു. ഡി. യിൽനിന്നും യാതൊന്നും ചെയ്യുന്നില്ല. ഗവണ്മെൻറു അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള പല റോഡുകളും പൂർത്തിയാക്കാതെ ഇട്ടിരിക്കയാണു ചെയ്യുന്നതു്. തൽക്കാലം റോഡുകളായി പണി പൂർത്തിയാക്കാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ലെങ്കിലും മനുഷ്യക്കു നടക്കത്തക്കവിധത്തിൽ ചില്ലിമുറോഡുകളായിട്ടെങ്കിലും അവയെ തീർക്കേണ്ടതു് അത്യാവശ്യമാണു്. കൃഷിസ്ഥലത്തേക്കു പോകുന്നതിനുള്ള സൌകര്യംപോലുമില്ലാതെ ഉൾനാടുകളിൽ പലരും വിഷമിക്കുന്നുണ്ടു് അങ്ങിനെയുള്ള സ്ഥലത്തെങ്കിലും റോഡുകൾ വെട്ടുന്നതിനു ഗവണ്മെൻറിൻറെ ശ്രദ്ധ പ്രത്യേകം പതിയണം. മൂവാറ്റുപുഴ താലൂക്കിൽ ഗവണ്മെൻറു് അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള പല റോഡുകളും പണി പൂർത്തിയാക്കാതിട്ടിരിക്കുന്നതിനാൽ ജനങ്ങൾ വളരെ കഷ്ടപ്പെടുന്നു.

President: While I do not wish to stifle or discourage discussion on this question of Public Works, I hope that honourable members will recollect that, to a very large extent, the Committee appointed by the Government to discharge the responsibilities in the matter of their needs in the several constituencies, have a right to tender advice which will, normally speaking, be accepted.

Mr. E. K. Kuripe: സർ, പട്ടണങ്ങളിൽ ചെലവാക്കുന്നിടത്തോളംതന്നെ പണം ഉൾനാടുകളിൽ ചെലവാക്കിയില്ലെങ്കിലും മനുഷ്യക്കു നടക്കത്തക്കവിധത്തിലെങ്കിലും ഉള്ള റോഡുകൾ പണിയുന്നതിനുള്ള പണം ചെലവാക്കണമെന്നാണു ഞാൻ പറയുന്നതു്. തന്നെയുമല്ല, ഓരോ ആണ്ടിലും അതാതു താലൂക്കുകളിൽ ഇതിലേക്കു അനുവദിക്കുന്ന പണം മേലാൽ മുഴുവനും അതാതു ആണ്ടുകളിൽത്തന്നെ ചെലവാക്കണമെന്നും എനിക്കു പേക്ഷയുണ്ടു്.

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